

The Society of Red-Headed Men

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle



PART I

I called upon my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes, the famous English detective, one day last autumn in London and found him in conversation with a fat, middle-aged gentleman with bright red hair.

"Pardon me, Holmes," I said, "I didn't know —"

"Come in, Watson," said Holmes, pulling up a chair for me. "You could not have come at a better time."

"But perhaps you are busy."

"It doesn't matter," said Holmes. Then turning to the fat gentleman, he added, "Mr. Wilson, this man has been my companion and assistant in many of my most successful cases, and I have no doubt that he can help me in your case also."

The fat man rose from his chair and looked me over carefully.

"Do you mind starting your story again from the very beginning, Mr. Wilson?" Holmes asked. "I want Dr. Watson to hear all of the details, because it seems to me quite a singular case, unlike any other case in my experience. At present I cannot say whether there is any clear evidence of crime or not."

The fat gentleman pulled an old newspaper from his pocket and while he looked carefully down a column of advertisements, I took the opportunity to observe the man. I did not learn much from my inspection, however, because he looked like any other normal, middle-class Englishman. The only thing unusual about him was his bright red hair. Holmes, on the other hand, with his great powers of observation, was no doubt already able to give the whole history and background of the man just from looking at his clothes, his manners, and the numerous details of his general appearance.

"Here is the advertisement," said Mr. Wilson at last. "The whole thing began with this advertisement. You can read it for yourself, sir."

I took the paper from him and read as follows: *To the Society of Red-Headed Men: There is now another position open in the Society of Red-Headed Men. The Society was founded some years ago with money left by Mr. E. Hopkins of Pennsylvania, U. S. A. The salary is four pounds a week for very little work. Any red-headed man over twenty-one may apply for the position. Ask for Duncan Ross at the offices of the Society of Red-Headed Men, 7 Fleet Street, Monday morning at eleven o'clock.*

"What does this mean?" I said after I had read it twice, trying to figure it out.

Holmes smiled and seemed to be in good spirits as was his custom when beginning a new and interesting case. "It is quite unusual, isn't it?" he said. "And now, Mr. Wilson, tell us something about your personal life and about the effect which this advertisement had upon your fortunes. You will note the date of the newspaper, Watson. This advertisement appeared exactly two months ago."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. What is the name of the famous detective mentioned in this story?
2. Was Sherlock Holmes an American or an Englishman?
3. Does the story open in the apartment of Sherlock Holmes or in the apartment of Dr. Watson?
4. Why had the red-headed man come to call on Sherlock Holmes?
5. What strange advertisement did he bring with him?
6. What was the Society of Red-Headed Men?
7. Had the society been founded by an Englishman or an American?
8. Did the gentleman who called on Mr. Holmes at the beginning of this story have bright red hair or dark red hair?
9. Could any one apply for the position mentioned in the advertisement, or was it limited to red-headed men?
10. In what city does this story take place?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

A. Fill in the blanks in the sentences in the right-hand column with one of the words or expressions in the left-hand column:

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|-------------|--|
| 1. singular | 1. I want to _____ the report that |
| 2. mind | Miss Jones has been typing. |
| 3. founded | 2. I can't _____ this report; it still |
| 4. call on | puzzles me. |

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 5. look over | 3. She tries to _____, but some days |
| 6. figure out | she is very sad. |
| 7. at present | 4. I don't _____ doing that job. |
| 8. on the other hand | 5. _____ I can't give you an answer; perhaps I'll know the answer later. |
| 9. be in good spirits | 6. _____ you believed what he said, but I wasn't sure at all. |
| 10. advertise | 7. That was a very _____ event; I've never seen anything like it. |
| 11. autumn | 8. The leaves fall from the trees in the _____. |
| 12. no doubt | 9. That restaurant was _____ in 1898; it is very old. |
| | 10. I may take a trip; _____ I may stay at home. |
| | 11. When I went to _____ my friend, he was too sick to see me. |

B. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. call on | 6. no doubt |
| 2. pull up a chair | 7. as follows |
| 3. look over | 8. on the other hand |
| 4. be in good spirits | 9. affect |
| 5. doesn't matter | 10. effect |

PART II

"Well, as I was telling you before," Mr. Wilson said, "I have a small business in which I lend money to people on jewels, clothing, and other personal things. My shop is located on Coburg Square, and I myself live in a few rooms in the same house behind my shop. Recently, business has not been very good, and it has been difficult for me even to make my living. I used to have two clerks, but now I have only one, and he fortunately works for about half pay. If I had to pay him more, I would not be able to keep him."

"What is the name of this young man who so kindly works for half pay?" asked Holmes.

"His name is Vincent Spaulding, and he is not so very young. I don't really know his age. But he is very capable and works very well. I often wonder why he doesn't leave me for a better position somewhere else."

"Yes, it is unusual," said Holmes. "Perhaps it is as unusual as your advertisement."

"Oh, he has his faults," said Wilson. "For example, he is very much interested in photography and spends a lot of time taking photographs. Then he always has to run down to the cellar and to spend time there developing his pictures."

"He is still with you, I suppose," said Holmes.

"Oh, yes," said Wilson. "And, incidentally, it was he who first brought this advertisement to my attention. He came to the store one day with this very paper in his hand, saying:

"I certainly wish, Mr. Wilson, that I were a red-headed man."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because here's another opening in the Society of Red-Headed Men. It's worth quite a lot of money to any man who can get it. They say that the salary is very good and that there is very little work connected with it. I surely wish that my hair would change color."

"What kind of work is it?" I asked. You see, Mr. Holmes, I don't know much about what goes on in the world. I don't read the newspapers much and I usually stay at home every night.

"Haven't you ever heard of the Society of Red-Headed Men?" Spaulding asked.

"Never."

"That's strange, because you yourself are red-headed and perhaps could obtain one of the positions."

"And what are they worth?" I asked.

"Oh, only a couple of hundred pounds a year, but the work is light and a person can often do it and continue with his regular work at the same time."

"Tell me all about it," I said, because naturally I was interested in the possibility of getting that extra money.

"Well," said he, "You can see for yourself. The Society has a position open now, and there is the address with all the information. As I understand it, the Society was founded by an American millionaire, Mr. E. Hopkins, who was very strange in his manners. He himself was red-headed, and he had a great sympathy for all red-headed men. When he died he left an enormous fortune with instructions to form the society and give opportunities to red-headed men. It is always easy work and very good pay."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Was Mr. Wilson a businessman or a professional man?
2. Did Mr. Wilson say that it had been easy or difficult for him to earn a living?
3. Did Mr. Wilson's assistant work for double pay or for half pay?
4. Was Sherlock Holmes an efficient or an inefficient detective?
5. Why did Mr. Wilson's assistant spend much time in the cellar of the shop?
6. What hobby was he presumably practicing there?
7. Who had first brought the advertisement to the attention of Mr. Wilson?
8. Was the position offered in the advertisement an easy or a difficult one?
9. In what kind of business was Mr. Wilson?
10. Did Mr. Wilson employ many assistants in his shop or only one?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

A. Fill in the blanks in the sentences in the right-hand column with one of the words or expressions in the left-hand column:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. jewels | 1. We _____ live in that house, |
| 2. recently | but we moved a year ago. |

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 3. unusual | 2. She was so _____ in that book that she couldn't put it down. |
| 4. extra | 3. I _____ what time he'll get here; I wish he'd let us know. |
| 5. make a living | 4. The _____ in her necklace were shining in the candlelight. |
| 6. used to | 5. He always wants something _____ to eat; he's never satisfied with what he's given. |
| 7. incidentally | 6. He asked me to _____ him some money, but I didn't have any. |
| 8. interested | 7. This is a very _____ piece of jewelry; I've never seen anything like it. |
| 9. spend time | 8. I saw her quite _____; in fact, it was only a few days ago. |
| 10. wonder | 9. I wanted to _____ talking to you, but I was so busy that I couldn't. |
| 11. lend | 10. He wants to _____ as a painter, but it doesn't pay well. |

B. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. make a living | 6. hear of |
| 2. make up one's mind | 7. bring to one's attention |
| 3. spend time | 8. used to |
| 4. stay at home | 9. leave a fortune |
| 5. go on | 10. recently |

PART III

"'But,' said I, 'there are millions of red-headed men who could fill the position.'

"'Not so many as you think. First, it is limited to Londoners and to adult men. This American was born in London and wished to do something for his home town. Then, also, I have heard that it is useless to ask for the position if your

hair is light red or dark red, or anything except bright red like yours. I am sure, Mr. Wilson, that you could get the position easily if you were interested.'

"Now, it is a fact, gentlemen, that my hair is very bright red, and so I thought perhaps I might be able to earn this easy extra money. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know a lot about the entire matter, so I asked him to go with me the next day at eleven o'clock to the address given in the advertisement. Well, Mr. Holmes, I never hope to see such a sight again. It seemed that every man in London who had just a little red in his hair had come to Fleet Street to get the job. The street was crowded and there was a line a block long waiting to get in. When I saw how many men were there, I wanted to give up the whole idea and to return home, but Vincent Spaulding insisted that I wait and he also pointed out that although there were many men with hair of every shade of red, there were very few who had really bright red hair like mine. Finally, he pulled and pushed me through the crowd until we arrived at the steps of the office. There was a double line of men, some going in with high hopes and some leaving in despair."

"Very, very interesting," said Holmes. "Please continue."

"There was nothing in the office except a few chairs and a table, behind which sat a small man with red hair even brighter than mine. He said a few words to each man as he came in but he always found some fault with each one. Getting the position did not seem to be an easy matter after all. However, when my turn came, the man seemed very interested, and he closed the door behind me so that he could speak to me privately.

"'This is Mr. Wilson,' said Vincent Spaulding, 'and he would like to fill the position which is open in the Society of Red-Headed Men.'

"'Well, he seems to have the right color of hair,' the other answered. 'I don't know when I have seen anything so fine.' He then took a step backward, looked at me carefully for a minute, and then took my hand and shook it warmly.

"'You will excuse me,' he went on, 'if I do something a little unusual.' And then suddenly he took hold of my hair with both his hands and pulled and pulled until I cried with pain. 'There is water in your eyes,' he said when he finished. 'That is fine. But, you see, we have to be very careful, for we have twice been fooled by artificial hair and once by paint.' He then went to the window and shouted to the crowd below that the position had been filled. There was a cry of disapproval, but soon one by one everyone disappeared until there was not a redhead in sight anywhere except the office manager and me."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Was the position in the Society of Red-Headed Men limited to Londoners or to New Yorkers?
2. Did Mr. Wilson's assistant think it would be easy or difficult for Mr. Wilson to get the position?
3. Was Mr. Wilson interested or uninterested in earning a little extra money?
4. Did many men or few men apply for the position?
5. Did Mr. Spaulding insist that Mr. Wilson remain and try for the position or did he insist that they leave?
6. Was the man in the office pleased with all the applicants or did he always find some fault with each one?
7. Was he interested or uninterested in Mr. Wilson?
8. Was he satisfied or dissatisfied with the color of Mr. Wilson's hair?
9. Why did the man suddenly take hold of Mr. Wilson's hair and pull it strongly?
10. Was Mr. Wilson's red hair real or artificial?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

- A. Fill in the blanks in the sentences in the right-hand column with one of the words or expressions in the left-hand column:

- | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| 1. whole | 1. He _____ in New York City |
| 2. faults | thirty years ago. |

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 3. is fooled | 2. There were some soldiers who refused to _____ even though the war was over. |
| 4. artificial | 3. I want to _____ with that project now that I've started it. |
| 5. disapproval | 4. The people filed into the room _____. |
| 6. however | 5. _____ flowers are made of plastic. |
| 7. was born | 6. Don't eat the _____ cake: let me have a piece. |
| 8. give up | 7. He _____ that conclusion by himself; nobody helped him. |
| 9. find fault with | 8. Of course you're nearly perfect, but you do have one or two little _____. |
| 10. go on | 9. He's always criticizing me; he always tries to _____ me. |
| 11. arrived at | 10. She _____ by that trick every time; she never catches on to how it's done. |
| 12. one by one | 11. You can't go out in the street; _____, you can play in the yard. |

- B. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. be born | 6. go on |
| 2. give up | 7. take hold of |
| 3. arrive at | 8. one by one |
| 4. find fault with | 9. after all |
| 5. look at | 10. however |

PART IV

"'My name is Duncan Ross,' he said, 'And I myself am a member of the Society of Red-Headed Men.'

"He then asked me whether I was a married man and, when I said that I was not, he said that the society really preferred married men who might later have children also

with red hair, but perhaps they could accept me anyway. I then explained that I also was in business and was already busy during part of the day, but Vincent Spaulding then interrupted and said that he would be glad to take my place in the shop.

"What would be the hours?" I asked.

"Every day from ten until two."

"Now my business is mainly done in the evenings anyway, and I knew that Vincent Spaulding could easily do the work during the day, so it seemed quite satisfactory.

"That would suit me very well," I said. "And what is the pay?"

"Four pounds a week."

"And the work?"

"The work," he said, "is very simple. You have to be in this office everyday from ten to two, and if you leave at any time during these hours you immediately lose the position. During this time, each day, you simply have to copy pages from the encyclopedia. You start with the first volume, and you must bring your own pen, paper, and ink. Will you be ready to begin tomorrow?"

"Certainly," I said.

"Then, good-bye, Mr. Wilson, and let me say that I think you are very fortunate to have obtained such an excellent position." We then shook hands, and I went home with my assistant in very fine spirits because of my good luck.

"By evening, however, when I began to think about the entire affair, I was less happy. It seemed to me rather ridiculous that someone was prepared to pay me all that money simply to sit four hours each day in a small office and copy words and sentences from the encyclopedia. I thought that somebody must be playing a joke on me. But Vincent Spaulding insisted that he was sure everything was all right, so the next day I decided to try it anyway. I bought paper, ink, and a pen and started out.

"Well, to my great surprise, everything turned out to be very satisfactory. The table was ready for me, and Mr.

Duncan Ross was there waiting for me. He started me copying with the letter A and, from time to time, he would come in to see how I was doing. At two o'clock he wished me good-bye and said that he was very pleased with my work.

"This went on day after day and on Saturday Mr. Ross came in and paid me my salary of four pounds. I was very happy. As time went on Mr. Ross visited me less and less often until finally he seldom came at all except to pay me on Saturday. Of course, I could not leave the office at any time for fear of losing such a good position."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Why did the Society of Red-Headed Men prefer married men as members?
2. Did the position require long hours or short hours?
3. What was the work required by the position?
4. Was this work easy or difficult?
5. From what book did Mr. Wilson have to copy?
6. Was Mr. Wilson pleased or displeased at having gotten such a fine position?
7. With what letter of the alphabet did he have to begin his copying work?
8. As time went on, did Mr. Ross visit him less and less or more and more?
9. To Mr. Wilson's surprise did everything turn out to be very satisfactory or very unsatisfactory?
10. With what volume of the encyclopedia did he have to begin copying?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

- A. Circle the word or expression in the right-hand column that has the SAME meaning as the word on the left:

- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. call on | telephone/visit/criticize/admire |
| 2. autumn | spring/duty/necessity/fall |
| 3. mind | like/admire/want/object |

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 4. singular | unique/typical/charming/difficult |
| 5. founded | located/ended/established/continued |
| 6. jewels | coins/stamps/earrings/precious stones |
| 7. recently | rarely/suddenly/ a long time ago/lately |
| 8. unusual | interesting/strange/easy/difficult |
| 9. incidentally | now and then/after a while/by the way/
up to now |
| 10. extra | new/difficult/heavy/additional |
| 11. whole | new/in part/complete/a hole |
| 12. however | nevertheless/seldom/in addition/
by the way |
| 13. fault | virtue/defect/color/salary |
| 14. have to | should/may/must/ought to |
| 15. went on | began/stopped/occurred/continued |
| 16. seldom | rarely/recently/lately/frequently |

B. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. be in business | 9. because of |
| 2. (to) suit | 10. as a result of |
| 3. shake hands | 11. from time to time |
| 4. think about | 12. day after day |
| 5. play a joke | 13. seldom |
| 6. turn out | 14. frequently |
| 7. turn on | 15. wages |
| 8. turn off | 16. salary |

PART V

"Eight weeks passed away like this. I had copied almost everything under the letter A and was ready to begin with the letter B when suddenly the whole business came to an end."

"To an end?"

"Yes, sir! One morning I went to work at ten o'clock as usual, but the door was closed and locked, and there was a sign on the door. Here, you can read it yourself." He held up a piece of white paper, on which was written the following:

The Society of Red-Headed Men Has Been Discontinued.
October 9

Sherlock Holmes and I read the paper carefully, looked at each other for a moment, and then both of us suddenly began to laugh.

"I do not see anything very funny in it," said Mr. Wilson a little angrily. "If you can do nothing except laugh at me, I can go somewhere else."

"No, no," said Holmes. "I am really very interested in your case. It is most unusual. But it also has its humorous sides as well. But, tell me, what steps did you take next?"

"At first I did not know what to do. I went to some of the other offices in the same building, but no one knew anything about it. Then I went to the owner of the building. He said that he had never heard of the Society of Red-Headed Men. Then I asked him who Duncan Ross was. He said that the name was new to him.

"Well, the gentleman in Room Number 4," I explained.

"The red-headed man?"

"Yes."

"Oh," said he. "His name was William Morris. He was a lawyer and was using the office on a temporary basis until his own office was ready."

"Where can I find him?"

"Oh, at his new office. He did tell me the address. Yes, 17 King Street."

"I started off, but when I arrived at 17 King Street it was a large factory, and no one there had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris or Mr. Duncan Ross."

"And what did you do then?" asked Holmes.

"I simply went home and talked over the whole matter with my assistant, Mr. Vincent Spaulding. He said that he

was sure that I would receive some communication by mail from the Society and that I should wait. But in the meantime I did not wish to lose such a good position, and, since I had heard that you, Mr. Holmes, sometimes help poor people with their problems, I decided to come and consult with you.'

"You were very wise," said Holmes. "I am sure I can help you. Your case is an extremely unusual one and I think that perhaps it is a more serious matter than you realize."

"It is serious," said Wilson. "I have lost a position which paid me very well."

"Quite true," said Holmes. "And now tell me something about that assistant of yours, Vincent Spaulding. He interests me greatly. How long had he been working for you when he brought you that advertisement?"

"About a month."

"How did he come?"

"In answer to an advertisement."

"Was he the only person who answered the advertisement?"

"No, there were about a dozen."

"Why did you choose him?"

"Because he seemed capable and because he offered to work at about half the usual salary."

"What is he like, this Vincent Spaulding?"

"Small in stature, very quick in his manners, very little hair on his face although he must be about thirty years old. He also has a mark on his forehead."

Holmes sat up in his chair in great excitement. "I think I know him," he said. "Does he also have small holes in his ears in order to wear earrings?"

"Yes, he does."

"Well," said Holmes. "And he is still with you?"

"Yes, and he is still doing his work well."

"That will do, Mr. Wilson," Holmes said. "I shall be happy to give you an opinion within a day or two—probably by Monday."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Did Mr. Wilson spend eight years or only eight weeks doing his copying work?
2. What sign did Mr. Wilson find on the door of the office one morning when he went to work?
3. When Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson read this sign, did they suddenly begin to cry or to laugh?
4. Was Mr. Wilson pleased or annoyed when Holmes and Watson laughed at his story of the sign?
5. When Mr. Wilson went to the owner of the building to inquire about Mr. Ross, did the owner know anything of Mr. Ross or was he entirely ignorant of such a person?
6. Why had Mr. Wilson finally come to consult Sherlock Holmes?
7. Did Sherlock Holmes think that he was able or unable to help Mr. Wilson?
8. How had Mr. Wilson come to employ his assistant, Mr. Spaulding?
9. Did Holmes claim to know Mr. Spaulding or was Mr. Spaulding entirely unknown to him?
10. Had Mr. Ross used the name of Ross when renting the office or had he used another name?

Structure Review

Give the negative form of each of the following sentences. Do not change the tense.

Example: I called upon my friend.

I didn't call upon my friend.

1. You could have come at a better time.
2. He can help me with my problem.
3. He arrived at that answer by himself.
4. He will be ready to step in at any time.
5. We must cross the street at the corner.
6. The eight weeks had passed away.
7. I went to work as usual.

8. I see something very funny in it.
9. I have heard of that society.
10. She explained the problem to me very carefully.
11. It was a humorous event.
12. She always pays attention to him.
13. You will receive a communication by mail.
14. He has been working for me a long time.
15. He offered to work at about half the usual salary.
16. He is doing his work well.

PART VI

"Well, Watson," Holmes said after our visitor had left, "what do you think about it all?"

"I cannot understand it," I said. "It is certainly a mysterious business."

"As a rule," said Holmes, "the mysterious cases are usually the easy ones. The cases that look simple are often the most difficult."

"What are you going to do then?"

"I am going to smoke for about an hour and think about it." He sat comfortably in his chair, lit his pipe, and thus I left him alone for some time. Then suddenly, he jumped up and said:

"Come with me, Watson. There is a great violinist in town who is playing this afternoon. I am sure you can leave your patients for a few hours."

"I have little to do today," I said.

"Then put on your hat and coat and come with me. First, I am going by way of Coburg Square, where our friend Mr. Wilson has his shop. I want to take a look at the general neighborhood."

Thus we went first by subway as far as Aldersgate and from there we walked to Coburg Square, where we soon saw Wilson's shop. It was one of several two story houses, all rather dirty, and poorly kept. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of the shop and looked it over carefully. Then he

walked slowly up the street to the corner, examining all of the houses. Finally, he came back to Wilson's shop and pounded on the sidewalk with his cane. Then he went suddenly up to the door and knocked. A bright-looking, clean young man opened the door and asked him to step in.

"Thank you," said Holmes. "I only wished to ask how to reach the Strand Theater from here."

"Three blocks right and four left," the young man answered, closing the door.

"A very clever fellow," said Holmes as we walked away.

"He is, in my opinion, one of the most clever men in London—and he is also extremely brave. I have known something of him before."

"Apparently, Mr. Vincent Spaulding plays an important part in this mystery of the Society of Red-Headed Men," I said. "I suppose that you knocked at the door in order that you might see him."

"Not him."

"What then?"

"The knees of his trousers."

"And what did you see?"

"What I expected to see."

"Why did you pound upon the sidewalk?"

"My dear Doctor, this is a time for observation, not for talk. We are in enemy territory and must be careful. Let us look around a little more."

We turned the corner and found ourselves on a very busy street, quite the opposite from the one on which Mr. Wilson's shop was located. There was much traffic and a constant stream of people hurrying along.

"Let me see," said Holmes, standing at the corner and looking down the street. "I should like to remember the exact order of the buildings here. There is first a tobacco shop, then a newspaper office, then the City Bank, and next a restaurant. And now I believe we have done our work and I have seen exactly what I expected to see. So it is time we had a sandwich and some coffee and then went to hear that violinist."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Did the case seem simple or mysterious to Dr. Watson?
2. Why did Sherlock Holmes sit down for a while and smoke his pipe?
3. Did he later invite Dr. Watson to hear a violinist or a pianist play?
4. Why did Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson later go to the neighborhood of Wilson's shop?
5. Did they find the shop to be large and impressive or rather dirty and poorly kept?
6. Why do you suppose Holmes pounded on the sidewalk with his cane?
7. Who answered when Holmes knocked at the door of Wilson's shop?
8. Did Holmes say that he had wanted to see Vincent Spaulding or only the knees of his trousers?
9. Why do you suppose Holmes was interested in seeing the knees of Vincent Spaulding's trousers?
10. What important buildings did Holmes and Watson find on the street next to that on which Wilson's shop was located?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

- A. Fill in the blanks in the sentences in the right-hand column with one of the words or expressions in the left-hand column:
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|-------------------|---|
| 1. talk over | 1. I _____ him from time to time |
| 2. hear of | 2. He _____ through friends. |
| 3. hear from | 3. Give me that book; I want to _____ |
| 4. put on | 4. We'll get up early and _____ at dawn. |
| 5. took off | 5. That package was sent _____. |
| 6. constant | 6. She always likes to get her clothes at a small _____ rather than a department store. |
| 7. take a look at | |
| 8. came to an end | |
| 9. start off | |
| 10. by mail | |

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 11. shop (noun) | 7. I _____ her regularly; she writes every month. |
| 12. come to an end | 8. When the concert _____, they applauded the singer. |
| | 9. The party will _____ at midnight, and then we must all go home. |
| | 10. We should _____ that idea very carefully before we decide. |
| | 11. He _____ his hat when he left the house. |

B. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. take a look at | 6. start off |
| 2. look over | 7. by mail |
| 3. look around | 8. in the meantime |
| 4. look at each other | 9. as far as |
| 5. come to an end | 10. as a rule |

PART VII

Sherlock Holmes was a great lover of music, and he himself played the violin well and had even composed some music. All afternoon he sat listening to the music and was perfectly happy. Now he did not resemble at all the sharp, clever and brilliant detective that he was. He was quiet and dreamy now. But soon he would change, and, after such a period of rest and inactivity, he would be even more ready for the work at hand.

"You want to go home now, no doubt, Doctor," he said as we were leaving the theater.

"Yes, I should like to," I said.

"And I have some business to do which will take some hours. This business at Coburg Square is serious.

"Someone is planning an important crime. I believe that we shall be in time to stop it. But today is Saturday, and that rather complicates matters. I shall want your help tonight."

"At what time?"

"Ten will be early enough."

"I shall be at your apartment at ten."

"Very well. And, Doctor, there may be a little danger, so put your revolver in your pocket." Then he smiled, turned away, and was soon lost in the crowd.

Now I do not think that I am more stupid than the next person, but whenever I was working with Sherlock Holmes I felt very much inferior. Here I had heard what he had heard. I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he now clearly knew not only what had happened but what was going to happen. Yet to me the entire business was still very much confused. As I drove home to my house I thought it all over from the beginning to Mr. Wilson's story of the advertisement to the end but I could not figure it out. Where were we going that night and why did I have to carry a revolver?

It was a quarter past nine when I started from home, passed through the park, and finally arrived at Holmes' apartment. As I entered the hall, I heard voices, and upon entering Holmes' room, I found him in conversation with two men, one of whom I recognized as Peter Jones, the official police inspector. The other was a long, thin-faced man who carried a black hat and wore a long frock coat.

"Well, now our party is complete," said Holmes, putting on his hat and coat. "Watson, I think you know Mr. Jones of the government police. Let me introduce you to Mr. Merryweather, who is going to be our companion in tonight's adventure."

"I hope our adventure does not prove to be a foolish one," said Mr. Merryweather a little sadly.

"You can have great confidence in Mr. Holmes, Sir," said Jones, the police officer, to Mr. Merryweather. "He has his own special methods which are, if he doesn't mind my saying so, a little too fantastic and theoretical at times, but he is a pretty good detective anyway."

"Oh, if you say so, Mr. Jones, it is all right," said Mr. Merryweather, "but it is Saturday night, and it is the first

Saturday night in twenty-seven years that I have missed playing my usual game of cards."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Was Holmes interested or uninterested in music?
2. What musical instrument did he play well?
3. What is the difference between a composer and an author?
4. Who is your favorite composer?
5. Did Holmes consider the case in question a serious or an unimportant one?
6. Did he feel that they would be able or unable to prevent the crime?
7. When Dr. Watson was working with Sherlock Holmes on a case, did he always feel inferior or superior to Holmes?
8. When Dr. Watson went to Holmes' apartment that evening, what men did he find there in conversation with Holmes?
9. Did Mr. Merryweather seem enthusiastic or unenthusiastic about the night's adventure?
10. How had he spent every Saturday night during the past twenty-seven years?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

A. Fill in the blanks in the sentences in the right-hand column with one of the words or expressions in the left-hand column:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. evident | 1. _____ he is busy; then sometimes he doesn't have enough to do. |
| 2. on time | 2. She was _____ delighted with the present I gave her. |
| 3. in time | 3. Sit down for a minute while I _____ the answer to this problem. |
| 4. at times | 4. He always has to _____ and wave his hand when the teacher asks a question. |
| 5. take time | |
| 6. all afternoon | |
| 7. arrived at | |
| 8. as a rule | |
| 9. perfectly | |

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 10. figure out | 5. We got downtown _____ to |
| 11. have confidence in | have dinner before the movie. |
| 12. jump up | 6. It's necessary to _____; don't |
| | rush in without thinking. |
| | 7. I know he will do the right thing; I |
| | _____ his judgment. |
| | 8. He left for lunch and he hasn't been |
| | in _____. |
| | 9. It is _____ that we can't reach |
| | an agreement, so let's not discuss |
| | the matter any more. |
| | 10. The plane was scheduled to arrive at |
| | six, and it came in exactly _____. |
| | 11. I'd like to know how you _____ |
| | that conclusion; I can't see it at all. |

B. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. take time | 6. arrive at |
| 2. take out | 7. have confidence in |
| 3. take a walk | 8. in time |
| 4. think over | 9. at times |
| 5. figure out | 10. at all |

PART VIII

"I think you will find," said Sherlock Holmes, "that you will play a much more interesting game than cards tonight. You, Mr. Merryweather, will win a great sum of money; and you, Jones, will catch the man you have been looking for so long."

"John Clay, the thief and murderer!" said Jones. "He's a young man, Mr. Merryweather, but he is the most clever man in the business, a very exceptional man! His grandfather was a royal duke, and he himself was educated in the University of Oxford. His brain is as clever as his fingers, and though we find signs of him in many crimes we have never been able to catch him."

"I hope I may have the pleasure of introducing you to him tonight," said Holmes. "Now, however, it is past ten o'clock, and it is time we started. If you two will take the first cab, Watson and I will follow in the second."

During the long drive Holmes did not talk much but did explain that Mr. Merryweather was a director of the City Bank and therefore very interested in the night's adventure. He also said that he had invited Jones because he thought it was best to have a police officer with us.

Finally we reached the same busy street that we had visited that morning and we got out of our cabs directly in front of the City Bank. We went to a side door of the bank, which Mr. Merryweather opened for us with his keys and we then entered the bank.

We passed down a long hall which ended in a strong iron door. This door Mr. Merryweather also opened for us. Then we went down some stone steps and through another strong iron door which Merryweather opened. We were now in a deep stone cellar, where there were many boxes one on top of another.

"You are certainly safe from any robbery above," said Holmes.

"And also safe from robbery below," said Merryweather, striking the stone floor with his cane. "Good Heavens, it sounds as if it were empty below."

"I must really ask you to be a little more quiet," said Holmes severely. "You have almost placed our entire plan in danger. I must ask you to sit down on one of these boxes and wait patiently."

Mr. Merryweather took a place on one of the boxes and Holmes, meanwhile, knelt down and began to examine carefully the stones of the floor with his magnifying glass. Soon he rose to his feet again and put his glass in his pocket.

"We have at least an hour to wait," he said, "for they will probably not try to do anything until after Mr. Wilson has gone to bed. Then they will not lose a minute, for if they do their work quickly, they will have more time to escape. You know, of course, Dr. Watson, that we are in

the cellar of the City Bank, and Mr. Merryweather can tell you why London thieves are so interested in entering the place at present."

"It is our French gold," said Merryweather. "About two months ago we borrowed about 30,000 pounds from the Bank of France. It is located in these very boxes on which we are sitting."

"And now it is time that we prepare our plans," said Holmes. "I expect that within an hour we may expect some action. We must put out the light and remain in the dark behind these boxes. When they come, I will turn my light on them, and we will jump on them."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Was Mr. Jones very interested or was he uninterested in catching the criminal, John Clay?
2. Was John Clay a clever or a stupid fellow?
3. Is it easier for the police to catch a stupid criminal or a clever one?
4. Was John Clay an educated or an uneducated man?
5. Was Mr. Merryweather another police officer or a director of the City Bank?
6. Did they enter the bank by the front door or did Mr. Merryweather open a side door for them?
7. With what were the boxes which they found there filled?
8. Had the money been borrowed from the Bank of France or from the Bank of America?
9. Do you have a savings account in some bank?
10. Was the bank in this story well protected or poorly protected against robbery?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

- A. Match the word on the left with its OPPOSITE in the right-hand column:

1. lend _____ close
2. open _____ last

3. easy _____ answer
4. first _____ seldom
5. behind _____ dull
6. question _____ leave
7. enter _____ dark
8. find _____ borrow
9. sharp _____ noisy
10. quiet _____ in front of
11. light _____ lose
- _____ difficult

- B. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

1. sum
2. cab
3. hall
4. magnifying glass
5. borrow
6. lend
7. look for
8. get out of
9. sit down
10. go to bed
11. get up
12. be interested in
13. in front of
14. as if
15. in danger
16. within an hour

PART IX

I placed my gun on top of a box and stood quietly waiting. It was now completely dark and there was a feeling of tenseness and anxiety among us.

"There is only one way for them to escape from here," said Holmes. "That is back through Wilson's place. I hope that you have done what I asked you, Jones."

"I have an inspector and two officers waiting at the front door."

"Then we have stopped all the holes. And now we must be silent and wait."

It seemed that we waited a very long time. Actually, it was only about an hour, but it seemed to me that the night must have gone and that morning would arrive soon. My

legs were tired, for I was afraid to change my position or to make any noise. Then suddenly I saw a light along the floor. At first it was very small but soon it grew longer. It came from the side of one of the stones which formed the floor. There was next a long pause and then suddenly there was a loud noise as one of the stones was turned over. A strong light now came from the hole where the stone had lain. Soon the head of a young man appeared. The man then put his hands on the side of the hole and pulled himself up. He now stood on the side of the hole. He then reached down and helped a second man to climb up out of the hole. This second man had bright red hair similar to Mr. Wilson's.

"All clear!" the first man said. "Have you the bags and the tools? Heavens! Jump, Archie! Run!"

Sherlock Holmes had jumped out and thrown himself upon the first man. The second man jumped down into the hole as Jones tried to catch him. The first man had a revolver in his hand but Holmes knocked it out of his hand with his walking stick.

"It's no use, John Clay," said Holmes. "You have no chance at all."

"So I see," the other answered coolly. "But my companion has escaped."

"There are three men waiting for him at the door of Wilson's shop," said Holmes.

"You have done everything very completely."

"You also did everything very completely," said Holmes. "Your idea of the red-headed society was very clever."

Jones then came forward and placed handcuffs on Clay. There was an angry exchange of words between them, but Jones finally led him away as we followed them from the cellar.

"Really, Mr. Holmes," said Mr. Merryweather, "I do not know how the bank can thank you or repay you. There is no doubt that you have defeated two very dangerous criminals, and also saved the bank a great deal of trouble and expense."

"It gives me personal pleasure to have been able to capture John Clay," said Holmes. "This is sufficient satisfaction for me. I have had a few small expenses in the matter, and the bank can repay me for those."

Comprehension and Discussion Questions

1. Did Holmes and his party await quietly or noisily the approach of the criminals?
2. Was the room in which they waited completely dark or completely light?
3. Was there any way of escape for the criminals or had all ways been blocked by the police?
4. Did a light suddenly appear along the floor or along the ceiling?
5. How had the criminals reached the bank from Wilson's shop?
6. What were the criminals planning to do in the cellar of the bank?
7. What did Jones place on the wrists of John Clay before leading him away?
8. Where have you met John Clay previously in this story?
9. When Holmes threw himself upon John Clay, what did the other criminal do?
10. Did the second man escape or were there policemen waiting for him at the door of Wilson's shop?

Vocabulary and Idiom Review

- A. Circle the word in the right-hand column that RHYMES with the word on the left:

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 1. I'll | still/steel/style/stole |
| 2. yes | guess/gas/goes/geese |
| 3. goes | does/rose/raise/rise |
| 4. wise | ice/eyes/is/ease |
| 5. lose | loose/loss/chose/chews |
| 6. knees | niece/piece/sneeze/snows |

- | | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| 7. rose | loss/loose/less/chose |
| 8. light | weight/wet/white/wit |
| 9. this | keys/wise/bless/bliss |
| 10. he's | ice/eyes/is/ease |

B. Give the noun form of the following adjectives:

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. anxious | 6. dark |
| 2. dangerous | 7. important |
| 3. angry | 8. brave |
| 4. similar | 9. courageous |
| 5. silent | 10. possible |

C. Use the following expressions in sentences of your own:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. turn over | 6. it's no use |
| 2. pull up | 7. knock something down |
| 3. jump out | 8. on top of |
| 4. throw oneself upon | 9. at first |
| 5. come forward | 10. at last |

PART X

An hour later Holmes and I were sitting in his apartment in Baker Street, drinking a glass of wine.

"You see, Dr. Watson," said Holmes, "it was clear from the beginning that the only purpose of the fantastic *Society of Red-Headed Men* was to get poor Mr. Wilson away from his shop for several hours each day. It was a strange way of arranging it, but it would be difficult to imagine a better one. I suppose the method was suggested to Clay's clever mind by the fact that his companion and Mr. Wilson both had bright red hair. They had to pay Wilson four pounds a week to copy from the encyclopedia but, after all, they were playing for a much greater sum of money. The first

thing that made me suspicious was the fact that Mr. Wilson's assistant offered to work for half pay. Thus he must have had a very strong motive for wanting the position."

"But how did you figure out what the motive was?"

"Well, Mr. Wilson's business was a small one. Therefore, there was nothing in the house which they wanted. It must be something outside the house. What could it be? The assistant was very much interested in photography and spent much time in the cellar. The cellar? What was he doing in the cellar? I could think of nothing else except that they were making a tunnel to some place.

"I, of course, surprised you when we first visited Wilson's shop by pounding on the sidewalk with my stick. But I wanted to find out whether the tunnel ran behind or in front of the shop. Further, when I rang the bell and the assistant answered the door, I saw from his trousers that he had been working on his knees because his trousers were worn and dirty at that point. The only problem was to find out the direction of the tunnel. When we walked around the corner and saw the City Bank, I knew immediately that their plan was probably to run a tunnel to the cellar of this bank."

"But how could you tell that they would try to enter the bank tonight?"

"When they closed the offices of the *Society of Red-Headed Men* I knew that their work must be almost finished because they were no longer interested in Mr. Wilson's absence from the shop. But it was necessary that they act soon because the gold might possibly be moved somewhere else. Saturday would be better than any other day because the bank is closed on Sunday, and it would give them two days in which to escape."

"You figured it all out beautifully," I said.

"Oh, such little problems always interest me," said Holmes. "They are really very simple, and they help me to pass the time."